

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MUSCAT 01043 270928Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----087959 270932Z /21

P R 270849Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4530
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T MUSCAT 1043

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: IS, EG
SUBJECT: BRIEFING ON TALKS AT LEEDS CASTLE

REF: (A) STATE 185332, (B) STATE 185941, (C) STATE 188251

1. CHARGE JULY 26 BRIEFED YUSUF AL-ALAWI, UNDERSECRETARY OF
FOREIGN MINISTRY, ON TALKS AT LEEDS CASTLE JULY 17-19. BRIEFING
WAS TAKEN EXCLUSIVELY FROM REF A AS AMENDED BY REF B, WITH
CHARGE'S EARLIER BRIEFINGS OF OMANGOV OFFICIALS USED ALSO AS
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PAGE 02 MUSCAT 01043 270928Z

BACKGROUND.

2. ALAWI LISTENED ATTENTIVELY, THEN OFFERED THE FOLLOWING
COMMENTS:
(A) WHILE HE APPRECIATES THE NEED TO KEEP UP THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN
EQYPT AND ISRAEL AND UNDERSTANDS THE USG EFFORT TO ACCOMPLISH THIS,
HE BELIEVES WE ARE REQUIRING MORE PATIENCE FROM THE ARABS THAN

MAY BE POSSIBLE. THE SADAT INITIATIVE LOOKS LIKE IT WILL FAIL, AND EVEN MANY EGYPTIANS IN AND OUT OF THE GOVERNMENT WONDER WHY SADAT PERSISTS IN IT. (ALAWI SAID HE KNEW THIS FROM HAVING SPOKEN TO EGYPTIANS WHILE IN CAIRO DURING THE RECENT ARAB LEAGUE MEETING. CHARGE TOOK OCCASION TO REITERATE OUR STRONG CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR SADAT'S STRATEGY.) SADAT'S POSITION IS ALSO ERODING IN THE ARAB WORLD AS A WHOLE, ALAWI THOUGHT. THE TIME MAY COME FAIRLY SOON WHEN SADAT WILL BE OBLIGED TO ABANDON HIS INITIATIVE. ASKED IF OMAN STILL SUPPORTS THE SADAT INITIATIVE, ALAWI SAID YES IT DOES, BUT OMAN IS ON THE PERIPHERY OF THE ISSUE. OTHER ARAB STATES MORE DIRECTLY CONCERNED WITH THE PROBLEM, AND WITH THE STABILITY OF EGYPT, MAY HAVE TO ASK SADAT FOR HIS OWN GOOD TO DROP THIS POLICY. (B) SADAT HAS CONCEDED ALL HE CAN. IN FACT, MANY ARABS BELIEVE HE HAS CONCEDED TOO MUCH. SADAT HAS ONLY ONE CARD LEFT IN HIS HAND: THE UNITED STATES. SADAT THOUGHT WHEN HE WENT TO JERUSALEM LAST YEAR THAT HE COULD STIMULATE WASHINGTON TO APPLY PRESSURE ON ISRAEL, BUT THIS HAS NOT HAPPENED. MANY EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS NOW BELIEVE THAT NOTHING CAN BE EXPECTED FROM THE UNITED STATES. (REGARDING REF C, CHARGE DID NOT RPT NOT MENTION ANY MOVES USG MIGHT BE PLANNING, BUT EMPHASIZED OUR UNREMITTING HOPE THAT PROGRESS WILL EVENTUALLY OCCUR IN DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE PARTIES.) (C) IT IS USELESS TO LOOK FOR CONCESSIONS FROM ISRAEL AS LONG AS MENACHEM BEGIN IS THE ISRAELI PREMIER, ALAWI DECLARED. HE SAID THIS IN RESPONSE TO CHARGE'S COMMENT, DRAWN FROM AN EARLIER BRIEFING OF OMANGOV OFFICIALS, THAT THE ARABS MUST ALLOW TIME FOR EVOLUTION IN ISRAELI THINKING. CHARGE CAREFULLY STRESSED THAT WE HOPED FOR
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PAGE 03 MUSCAT 01043 270928Z

SUCH EVOLUTION UNDER BEGIN'S LEADERSHIP. ALAWI WAS OBVIOUSLY NOT CONVINCED.
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